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ABSTRACT

Graduate school deans were surveyed to determine whether their sex caused any significant differences in any aspect of their careers. Attention was directed to their backgrounds, college administrative experience, perceived power within the areas of their job functions; job satisfaction, long-range goals, and the size and function of the graduate office. A total of 247 usable responses to a questionnaire were received, representing a 66 percent response rate. By sex, 37 of 42 females deans responded, compared to 212 of 335 male deans. There were few significant differences between male and female graduate deans. Although most deans held administrative posts at some time before becoming graduate deans, 44 percent were faculty members before becoming deans. Male deans had spent significantly more years in higher education than had female deans. While graduate studies were the main function for 43 percent of the deans, 32 percent were involved with research and grants. There were no significant differences in the number of professional staff reporting to male and female deans. Overall, the deans had the most authority over setting graduate school policy, reviewing programs, and recommending program terminations. They had little authority in managing recovered costs, faculty hiring, promotion and tenure, and fund-raising. (SW)

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A STUDY OF THE GRADUATE DEANSHIP:
DOES GENDER MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

REPORT OF THE

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN

1983-84

COUNCIL OF GRADUATE SCHOOLS

IN THE UNITED STATES

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1983-84

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Introduction

The charge to the Committee on Women of the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States is to improve the status and representation of women in graduate education. In identifying a specific task for 1983-84, the committee decided to follow-up on the 1980 study by the Committee on Women which looked at career pathways of graduate school deans. The 1983-84 committee expanded its concerns to include the following: an investigation of the backgrounds of deans and their administrative experience in higher education; the size, scope, and function of the graduate office; perceived power within areas of graduate deans' functions; job satisfaction and dissatisfaction; and long range goals. All of these factors were to be examined relative to differences and similiarities between male and female graduate deans.

A questionnaire was developed and in November 1983 mailed to 377 CGS graduate deans. Institutions represented by those 377 deans account for 95% of all institutions granting the doctoral degree, and 80% of all institutions granting the masters degree.

Respondents were allowed to sign questionnaires or return them anonymously. By January 15, 1984, 247 useable responses were received for a 66% response rate. Six additional responses were received which could not be coded. These were from

institutions where graduate education was organized in such a way that it was located in another office, "in transition", or even "abolished"; two responses were from acting deans who felt they should not answer the questionnaire. By sex, 37 of 42 female deans responded (88%) and 212 of 335 male deans responded (63%). There was a significantly greater percentage of females responding than males ($p<.05$; $z = 2.05$).

Results

Part One

The first set of questions asked about the background of the dean. The mean age of all deans was 53.0 ($s = 7.3$) and there were no differences between the mean ages of female and male deans (male = 53.1, $s = 7.26$; female = 52.2, $s = 7.5$). The age of deans was significantly related to years of experience in higher education ($r = .526$, $p<.01$) and years of experience in administration ($r = 4.14$, $p<.01$). As might be expected, experience in higher education and years experience in administration were also significantly related ($r = .483$, $p<.01$). An interesting difference was found in the number of years experience in higher education between male and female deans. Males had significantly more experience on the average in higher education than females (males = 24.75, $s = 7.36$; females = 20.94, $s = 8.02$; $t = 2.63$, $p<.01$, $df = 4.45$). By contrast, there was no difference between experience in administration when comparing

male and female deans (males = 9.23, s = 6.33; females = 7.94, s = 7.4).

The great majority of deans are Caucasian (91%), are male (87%), have a PhD or ScD (87%) and were trained in the sciences (43%). The disciplines of the graduate deans are listed in Table 1. There were no significant differences between male and female deans concerning their disciplines, $p<.05$, Kolmogorov-Smirnov One-Sample Test; male responses = expected distribution.

Table 1

Discipline of Graduate Dean (N = 243)

Discipline	n	%	% Males (n = 209)	% Females (n = 34)
Physical Sciences	53	21.8	23.4	11.8
Life Sciences	47	19.3	18.2	26.5
Social Sciences	45	18.5	19.1	14.7
Humanities	40	16.5	16.3	17.6
Education	27	11.1	10.5	14.7
Engineering	11	4.5	4.8	2.9
Mathematics	11	4.5	4.8	2.9
Business	9	3.7	2.9	8.8

The position most often held immediately prior to becoming a graduate dean was some other administrative post. The most frequent of these was academic dean (33%) with department chairperson, director, or coordinator accounting for the other administrative experience (21%). Promotion to graduate dean directly from the professional ranks occurred 44% of the time. A significant proportion of females were promoted from professorial ranks in

comparison to males, but there was no significant difference between male and female deans concerning promotion from other administrative posts. (See Table 2.)

Table 2

Positions Held Prior to Becoming Graduate Dean

Position	n	%	% Male	% Female*
Professor	109	44.1	40.5	64.9
Other (usually Department Chair)	52	21.0	22.9	10.8
Associate/Assistant Graduate Dean	36	14.6	13.8	18.9
Academic Dean	29	11.7	13.3	2.7
Acting Dean	18	7.3	8.6	2.7
Not in Higher Education	2	.8	1.0	0

*Note. When the last four categories are combined into one there is a significant difference between the proportion of males' and females' positions held prior to becoming dean X^2 (2, N = 246) = 7.56, p<.05.

Part Two

The second part of the questionnaire focused on the characteristics of the institution at which the dean worked. As might be expected, the size of the institution and the size of the graduate student population were significantly related (r = .688, p<.01). Also, significant relations were found between the size of the institution and the degrees offered, with larger ones offering a doctorate (r = .162, p<.05), and size of graduate student population and degree offered (r = .180, p<.05). No

significant differences were found between the types of institutions in which male and female deans held positions.

Most of the institutions in which graduate deans work are public (75%); those who work in private schools (25%) will be working in significantly smaller schools, X^2 (3, N = 243) = 23.56, $p<.01$, with a significantly smaller graduate student body, X^2 (3, N = 244) = 11.11, $p<.025$. Neither the type of degrees offered nor the proportion of male and female deans was related to whether the institution was public or private.

Part Three

The functioning of a dean in his/her graduate school was the focus of the third part of the questionnaire. The largest number of graduate schools were concerned with graduate studies only (43%) and the next largest number were concerned with graduate studies, research, grants and contracts (32%); graduate studies and research accounted for 23% of the institutions and graduate studies with continuing education was a function in 7% of the institutions. (The percentages sum to over 100% because some categories were not mutually exclusive and two or more were checked.)

The size of the professional staff reporting to the deans varied from none to over 20 with the mean being 3.87 and about 55% of the deans having a staff of three or less. (Secretaries were not included in professional staff.) No significant differences were found between the sizes of the administrative

staff reporting to male deans or female deans ($t = 1.65$, $p>.05$, $df = 245$).

Respondents were asked about the gender of the administrators reporting to the dean. An analysis of the responses revealed that the number of male administrators reporting to male or female deans was much greater than the number of female administrators (to male dean: $t = 3.304$, $p<.001$, $df = 163$; to female dean: $t = 2.062$, $p>.05$, $df = 25$). When the proportion of the administrative staff reporting to the dean is considered, there is no difference between percent of females reporting to a female dean (46%) or percent of females reporting to male deans (47%).

The amount of authority a dean has in various areas where graduate schools usually function was measured by a set of questions on which the respondents were to place a number related to decision making from 0 (no authority) to 3 (virtual autonomy). Table 3 shows the perceived mean authority rating in the various functions. Although no significant differences were found, male deans rated themselves as having more authority than female deans did in most cases.

Since the questions seemed to ask for similar types of information and the data were ordinal, responses were also analyzed by factor analysis of a correlation matrix.

Table 3

Amount of Authority Graduate Deans Have Over Various Functions of the Graduate School

Function	Mean Authority Rating (0 = no authority to 3 = autonomy)		
	Total	Males	Females[1]
Allocation of Assistantships/ Fellowships	1.81 (1.01)[2]	1.85	1.60
Responsibility for Managing Internal Research Funds	1.30 (1.10)	1.32	1.14
Responsibility for Managing Recovered Cost From Funded Proposals	.80 (1.00)	.78	.38
Setting Policy Within the Graduate School	2.15 (.77)	2.15	2.19
Faculty Hiring, Promotion, Tenure, and/or Dismissal	.73 (.63)	.76	.58
Fund Raising	.72 (.74)	.73	.64
Review and Recommendations for Improving Graduate Programs	2.17 (.74)	2.18	2.14
Termination of Graduate Programs	1.74 (.79)	1.77	1.60

Note. [1]No significant differences were found between mean ratings of males and females.

[2]Numbers in parentheses are standard deviations.

Three factors seemed to describe different functioning of deans and these are described below.

Factor 1, accounting for about 17% of the variance, was defined by the following items correlating .3 or greater with the factor: (1) authority to review graduate programs; (2) authority to set graduate school policy ; (3) authority to terminate graduate programs. This factor can be called "Authority Over Graduate Program." Twenty-nine individuals loading 1.5 or greater on the factor (i.e. having a large part of their common variance explained by the factor) were identified. There were no significant differences between the number of male and female deans loading high on this factor ($p = .33$; $\underline{n} = 27$; Fisher Exact Probability Test).

Factor 2 accounted for 8% of the variance and is defined by the following items correlating .3 or greater with the factor: (1) authority to manage research funds; (2) authority to manage recovered costs from research; (3) number of male administrators reporting to the dean. This factor could be called, "Authority with Research Funds." There were no significant differences found between the number of male and female deans loading 1.5 or greater on this factor ($p = .45$; $\underline{n} = 28$; Fisher Exact Probability Test).

Factor 3 accounted for 6% of the variance and is defined by the following items correlating .3 or greater with the factor; (1) authority to raise a percentage of the budget; (2) authority to engage in fundraising; (3) authority in making decisions concerning faculty hiring, promotion and tenure; (4) number of male administrators reporting to the dean; (5) number of female

administrators reporting to the dean; and (6) authority to manage receovered costs from research. The definition of this factor was not clear since the items seemed to suggest authority in fundraising and personnel. It is assumed that these items may fit together by being related to more basic variables that were not a part of the factor analysis. Since fundraising may be more a function of private than public schools and since private schools tend to be smaller, the graduate dean of smaller private schools may have a wider diversity of functions to perform that may include the items defining Factor 3. To test this, responses from deans of private schools with enrollment under 10,000 and who were responsible for a broader range of functions than just graduate studies alone were identified. Eighteen of 240 deans fit the criteria (7.5%). Of that number seven (25%) loaded very high on Facotr 3, which was highly significant ($p = .004$, two-tailed binominal test). This factor can be called "Authority in Personnel and Fundraising" and is characteristic of smaller private schools with a broad mission for the graduate dean. No significant differences between male and female deans loading high on this factor were found ($p = .442$; $\underline{n} = 27$; Fisher Exact).

Part Four

Views on the graduate deanship, measured in the last part of the questionnaire, provided interesting data to analyze. The responses to the questions referring to what they saw as (1) their most significant contribution as a graduate dean, (2) the most enjoyable part of their job, (3) the worst part of

their job, and (4) what they would likely be doing in five years are summarized in Tables 4-8. Various non-parametric tests were used to determine if males and females responded in a different manner. As noted in each of the tables, no significant differences were found.

Table 4

Responses to the Question "I Believe My Most Significant Contribution as a Graduate Dean is..." (N = 221)

Response	n	% of Total	Cumulative %	% Male*	% Female*
Maintaining or Improving the Quality of Graduate Programs	43	19.5	19.5	19.3	20.0
Maintaining or Improving the Quality of the Institution or the Graduate School	39	17.6	37.1	17.2	20.0
Developing, Planning or Creating Graduate Programs	13	5.9	43.0	6.4	2.9
Improving the Amount and Quality of Research and Scholarly Activity	11	5.0	48.0	5.4	2.9
Assessing, Judging or Reviewing Graduate Programs	11	5.0	53.0	5.4	2.9
Creating and Developing Policy for the Graduate School	8	3.6	56.6	4.3	0
Administration of the Graduate School	8	3.6	60.2	3.7	2.9
Creating and Developing Projects in the Graduate School	7	3.2	63.4	3.2	2.9
Directing, Coordinating and Leading in the Graduate School	7	3.2	66.6	2.7	5.7

(table continues)

Response	n	% of Total	Cumulative %	% Male*	% Female*
Influencing or Facilitating the Completion of Activities in the Graduate School	7	3.2	69.8	2.1	8.6
Other Responses	67	30.3	100.1		

*Note. No significant differences were found between the proportions of males and females mentioning the above items ($p>.1$; $D = .104$; $n_1 = 130$, $n_2 = 24$; Kolmogorov-Smirnov One Sample Test). The rank of items most frequently mentioned by male deans was used as the basis of the expected distribution.

Table 5

Responses of Deans to the Question "The Most Enjoyable Part of My Job is..." (N = 213)

Response	n	Total	Cumulative %	% Male*	% Female*
Interacting With Faculty and Students	67	31.4	31.4	30	39
Influencing, Advising, Assisting Students and Faculty	24	11.3	42.7	13	3
Developing and Planning Graduate Programs and Policies	22	10.3	53.0	10	12
Facilitating the Growth of Projects, Programs and Scholarly Activities	17	8.0	61.0	9	3
Directing, Leading and Coordinating Various Aspects of the Graduate School	17	8.0	69.0	8.3	6
General Improvement of Quality in the Graduate School	11	5.1	71.4	6	3
Seeing Graduate Students and Faculty Achieve Goals	9	4.2	78.3	4	6
Acquire and Allocate Funds for Research and Student Aid	9	4.2	82.5	4	6
Other	37	17.5	100.0		

*Note. No significant differences were found between proportions of male and female deans mentioning the above items ($p>.1$; $D = .103$; Kolmogorov-Smirnov One Sample Test). The rank of items most frequently mentioned by male deans was used as the basis of the expected distribution.

Table 6

Responses of Graduate Deans to the Question "The Worst Part of My Job is..." (N = 206)

Response	n	% of Total	Cumulative %	% Male*	% Female*
Excessive Paperwork and Minutiae	46	22.0	22.0	20.9	29.0
Inability to Assist Programs and Faculty Due to Lack of Funds	31	14.9	36.9	15.8	9.7
Dealing with Administrators and Faculty Who Lack the Vision of the Whole Institution	16	7.7	44.6	6.8	12.9
Excessive Number of Meetings	15	7.2	51.8	8.5	0
Dealing with Appeals and Grievance Procedures	13	6.2	58	6.8	3.2
Dealing with Personnel Matters	11	5.3	63.3	5.6	0
Dealing with Bureaucracy Within and Outside the Institution	10	4.8	68.1	5.6	0
Having to Deny Students Admission, Aid or Having to Dismiss Them	9	4.3	72.4	3.9	6.4
Not Enough Time to Devote to Important Matters	9	4.3	76.6	3.4	9.7
Having to Insure that Departments, Faculty and Students Adhere to Policy	9	4.3	81.0	4.5	3.2
Other	39	19.0	100.0	18.1	22.6

*Note. No significant differences were found between proportions of male and female deans mentioning the above items ($p>.1$; $D = 12$; Kolmogorov-Smirnov One Sample Test). The rank of items most frequently mentioned by male deans was used as the basis of the expected distribution.

Table 7

Responses of Graduate Deans to the Question "Five Years from Now I Envision Myself..." (N = 206)

Response	n	% of Total	Cumulative %	% Male*	% Female*
In a Higher Position, e.g. President, Vice-President, Provost	57	28	28	25	45
Returning to Teaching and Research	48	23	51	25	10
Continuing as Dean	46	22	73	23	17
Retired	46	22	95	22	24
Continuing as Dean at Another Institution	5	2	97	2	3
Doing Something Completely Different	4	2	99	2	0

*Note. No significant differences were found between proportions of male and female deans mentioning the above items ($p>.1$; $D = .16$; Kolmogorov-Smirnov Two Sample Test).

As shown in Table 8, graduate deans generally feel satisfied with their accomplishments (97%); only 3% express dissatisfaction. No significant difference was found between male and female deans.

Table 8

Responses of Graduate Deans to the Question "How Satisfied Are You With Your Accomplishments As A Graduate Dean?" (N = 229)

	Rank	n	% of Total
Very Satisfied	2	108	47
Somewhat Satisfied	1	115	50
Not Satisfied	0	6	3

Note. There were no significant differences between mean rankings of males, 1.42 (s = .54) and females, 1.57 (s = .56), t (227) = 1.48, p>.1.

Discussion

For those 247 deans responding to the study, there are few significant differences between male and female graduate deans as measured by this instrument. Areas of similarity are: age, years of experience in administrative work, Caucasian, Ph.D. or Sc.D. degrees, and disciplines of the deans. Although most deans held administrative posts at some time before becoming graduate deans, 44% came to the deanship directly from professorial ranks, with a significant number of females in this group. The lack of differences can be viewed as a positive sign that women have made progress in aspiring to and achieving a major administrative post. Of some concern, however, is the fact that only 42 females hold the position of dean in the CGS membership of 377. Based on availability data of women in higher

education, it appears we might look to a goal of 94 female graduate deans or 25% of the total.

This study indicates that women who aspire to the graduate deanship would do well to build on and insure the quality of the professorial credentials in their chosen field. The physical sciences, life sciences, and social sciences seem to be the most usual fields for graduate deans, accounting for nearly 60% of the total. Administrative experience is necessary, but apparently not immediately prior to applying for the deanship.

Males in this study have spent significantly more years in higher education than females (means: males = 24.75; females = 20.94). This fact probably reflects what is generally true of women in the workforce--many women's earlier years have been taken up with raising their families and they have not worked "straight through" as most men have. Thus, the accumulation of years' service is usually not as great for women as men.

Although many deans function mainly with graduate studies (43%) an additional 32% are concerned with research and grants as well as graduate studies. Most schools seem not to include any continuing education functions with their graduate studies.

Since no differences were found between male and female deans at different types of institutions or those graduate schools with different functions, it appears that women may expect to hold deanships at large or small, and public or private institutions. Although not expected, this finding indicates that women may have an equal opportunity to be hired regardless of the size of institution, whether it is public or private, and whether the graduate school has one

function (graduate studies) or many. This questionnaire, however, did not address other factors of equal opportunity which might affect hiring practices.

Graduate deans report a mean of 3.87 professional staff reporting to them, with a range from zero to over 20. No differences exist between male or female deans and the numbers reporting to them, although it is interesting to note that the number of male professional staff persons reporting to either male or female deans is much higher than female persons on the staff. This may indicate a source of potential difficulty for females who wish to gain valuable administrative experience before seeking a deanship.

This study hypothesized that male deans would perceive themselves as having more autonomy in decision-making aspects of their work than females would. Although differences were not significant, six of eight variables showed that male deans viewed themselves as having more authority. Female deans ranked themselves slightly higher in managing recovered costs and setting policy within the graduate school. Overall, graduate deans appear to have most power in their authority over graduate programs, that is, setting policy in the graduate school, reviewing graduate programs, and making recommendations for termination of graduate programs. Most seem to agree they have little authority in managing recovered costs, faculty hiring, promotion and tenure, and fund raising. Generally, the smaller, private institutions seem to require more diversity of functions to be performed by the dean.

Graduate deans seem keenly concerned with quality. In the open-ended responses related to their perception of their most significant contribution, quality of programs, institution, and/or research was

mentioned by the majority of respondents. The deans' concern for monitoring, improving, developing, and coordinating programs clearly has high priority. Many deans, both male and female, greatly enjoy the interaction with faculty and students, and seem to derive a strong sense of accomplishment as they influence and assist students and faculty. They apparently receive considerable job satisfaction from the development of quality programs and scholarly activities on their campuses.

According to the deans in this study, the worst parts of their jobs deal with excessive paperwork and meetings, and insufficient funds to assist programs and faculty. The deans also expressed some frustration with those administrators and faculty who seemed to lack a vision for the whole institution. Personnel matters, appeals and grievance procedures, and negative interactions with students were identified by many deans as the least desirable aspects of their jobs.

For the future, graduate deans see themselves moving in one of four major directions: to advanced positions in higher education; returning to teaching and research; to retirement; or remaining in the graduate deanship. Directions for male deans are distributed evenly among these four directions, but a high percentage of the female deans identified moving to a higher position as their goal five years from now. The goal receiving the second highest number of votes for female deans was retirement.

The deans are generally satisfied with their accomplishments as graduate deans with only 3% expressing clear dissatisfaction.

Opinions of male and female deans as to their job satisfaction are mainly divided evenly among "very satisfied" and "somewhat satisfied", with female deans showing a high level of satisfaction for their job accomplishments.

In summary, this study provides a rich background of information on the present state of the graduate deanship. For graduate deans, whether male or female, areas of concern as well as perceptions of power appear to be similar. To answer the question posed by this study, it is encouraging to note that in most cases, gender does not make a difference.